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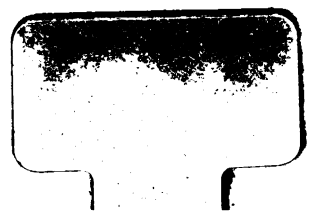

E. M. 1832

THE MISER:

A POEM.

Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.

——— Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
Auri sacra fames!

VIRG. ÆN.

LONDON:

BALDWIN AND CRADOCK.

1831.

557.

SUNDERLAND: PRINTED BY REED AND SON.

THE MISER:

A POEM.

AMONG the marv'llous tales by poets told,
Who yet has sung th' omnipotence of gold?
Prime regulator of all human things,—
The poor man's curse—false confidence of kings,
That oft the humble to a throne has rais'd,
And mighty monarchs in the dust abas'd.
In faithless billows dangers disappear,—
Swift driving storms bring distant treasures near;
Reward impels to dreadful deeds in arms,
With courage firm the coldest bosom warms.
Though poets are accus'd of thirst for praise,
A richer boon adds vigour to their lays:
This plumes for flight high contemplation's wing,
From other worlds intelligence to bring;
Calls genius forth to view great nature's plan,
Well stor'd, to serve the purposes of man;
Whose art tries all on which he lays his hold,
And, Midas-like, converts them into gold:
His restless temper ev'ry scheme contrives,
Now this discards for one that better thrives;
Keen in research, deep hidden treasures drains,
Dissatisfied when aught deludes his pains;

Earth, air, and water, each material rude,
Are all impress'd into his servitude!
Gold, emulation gives to ev'ry soul—
The principle that actuates the whole.
The ignorant and wise—the fair and brown,
From the deep statesman to the dullest clown,
All in submission bend before its shrine,
And offer honours equal to divine!

A thirst for gold's the curse of polish'd life,
And man turns wisdom to a source of strife:
While knowledge should instruct him to despise
Things he wants not, and to an angel rise,
He but employs it to enhance their worth,
And bind him faster to the toys of earth.
If reason's high pretensions yield such fruit,
Man has no privilege above a brute;
It helps him but his vices to refine,
And better manage each unfair design.

In getting riches many views conspire;
Respect, in general, kindles this desire.
Each, in his sphere, attempts to be possess'd
(Though the way to it may not be the best)
Of earthly good, on purpose to display
Th' importance of an insect for a day!
The views of men, how grovelling and low,
To aim no higher than external show,
And court the admiration of their kind!
A poor indulgence to a soul confin'd
From home a while, but destin'd to enjoy
Immortal glories that can never cloy.

But first she must be tutor'd for the place;
Put off the sordid habits that disgrace
The human name, resolv'd to rise above
The world and self, borne on the wings of love.

An independence oft is the pretence:
What's this condition in the soundest sense?
He's independent that can live alone,
Who needs no more assistance than a stone!
Reason allows—unbiass'd reason grants,
The man is most so who has fewest wants;
Whose heart's contented with his little store,
Nor envies those that have, nor covets more.
Increase possessions, and you soon will find
That wants run faster than to stay behind.
But few necessities to man belong;
When rich, he's daily pester'd with a throng,
That for supplies importunately crave,
And leave the master poorer than the slave.
Want seems but banish'd by abundance got;
It entrance finds by something you have not:
This thing obtain'd will shut it out of doors;
No, that you cannot do by getting stores.
To-day were all things suited to your taste,
The world itself as you would have it plac'd;
To-morrow brings an accident unseen,
From which no foresight could th' arrangement screen;
Another's whim will introduce a change,
And the whole plan of happiness derange.
To be in fashion, you have cards and dice,
T' amuse your friends—perhaps for avarice;
Politeness prompts you to provide those things,

Though never visited by dukes and kings;
Such courtly practices are common grown,—
As frequent at the cottage as the throne.
Whate'er the motive, this truth follows clear,
Had you content you would not seek it here.
Fortune may smile; yet is she never shy
With those that risk a thousand on a die?
Why risk at all? attention's kept awake
To ev'ry throw, when something is at stake.
What is your purpose when engag'd at play?
To send the rest with pockets drain'd away.
When anxiously for gain you are employ'd,
'Tis clear enough amusement is destroy'd.
They that sit down a vacant hour to spend,
Rise not before they have another end.
Some may be anxious but their own to save,
But this is not the law that rules the knave;
And when you have a sharper to oppose,
'Tis ten to one but you your honour lose,
And money too; for he that aims at gain
By throwing dice, will not escape a stain.
But loss of money is the least of all:
If virtue's lost, disgraceful is the fall.
When pastime players for a stake contest,
Upright intentions hardly rule the best;
Disputes proceed to acrimonious words,
And not unfrequent an appeal to swords.
Thus reason tamely yields to passion's sway,
And brutal deeds prove what is sought in play.
Respect you want, but gaming profits give
No reputation; creditably live:
Unpractis'd youth without remorse you peel;

To cheat is much genteeler than to steal.
A bold highwayman robs the first he meets,
And some poor fam'ly's only hope defeats;
This desperado risks more from his peer,
For a less prize, than gamblers have to fear.
Which of two crimes in villainy is worse,
To filch by shuffling, or to seize a purse?
Law's here unmindful of its public trust,
Guilt should in all receive a sentence just.
True satisfaction cannot be supply'd,
Till ev'ry vain desire is laid aside;
Both wealth and greatness are in worth too low;
'Tis found in virtue only—not in show,—
The virtue of the heart: no outward form
Can brave unshaken each conflicting storm.
Man's independence, then, is in the mind,
In motive pure, with nothing base combin'd.

Who for himself alone would wealth possess,
Mistakes the road to human happiness.
When means enable, and occasions call,
To give's a pleasure, though the gift be small;
A duty, too, that each another owes,
Which from their mutual dependence grows;
This to withhold betrays a niggard mind,
Dispos'd to take, but not return in kind.
Form'd is the soul for friendly intercourse,
Contracted tempers dry the social source;
Unkind affections, cherish'd and caress'd,
Like serpents vile, corrode the fost'ring breast:
When sorrows swell, the heart obtains relief
In kind attempts to ease another's grief;

The tenderness of pity softens woe,
As genial warmth consumes the harden'd snow.
Within his little sphere a sun he glows,
Who, unconstrain'd, his favours round bestows;
Each smiling countenance the boon returns,
With gratitude there's not a heart but burns;
Age teaches childhood to pronounce his name,
And ev'ry cottage echoes with his fame.
The meanest labourer affords a share
Of comfort to the op'lent by his care;
When sickness or old age arrests his hand,
He has upon the rich a just demand.
Who's most dependent—who receives the most,
The man that works, or he that pays the cost?
The cost is small, when balanc'd with the good
By toil bestow'd—convenience and food
On the employer, and the world at large,
Which merits well reward, miscall'd a charge.

What generous bosom overlooks reward?
'Tis affectation to pretend regard
But to the public welfare, not his own,
When one appears to lay advantage down.
A shorter way to aggrandize his name;
Wealth safely rides upon the back of fame.

The empty name a soldier earns in fight,
Is for his solid services too light;
A prize unequal to the dangers run,
And no proportion bears to battles won;
The recompence that on a breath depends,
For all his prowess makes but poor amends;

Fame still is fickle, when most dearly bought;
Nor always his reward who bravely fought:
The laurels won, for which each soldier bled,
Unjustly ornament a single head;
And if a second be allow'd a share,
'Tis far too scanty for a head that's bare.
Why madly plunge, then, into dangers deep,
And thousands struggle for what one must reap?
Another prize the warrior hopes to find,—
If fame goes first, a fortune is behind.
The passage to preferment open lies
To all that honourably attempt to rise.
Some lucky day a favour may bestow,
And raise him high whose station is below.
All are impatient, and exert their zeal
For elevation on the fickle wheel;
Which, as it turns in revolution o'er,
Leaves most advent'rers lower than before.

Who covets honour that from courage springs
Is plac'd above the want of meaner things;
Yet trophies newly won demand support,—
Their lustre's dim till brighten'd by the court.
Without due nourishment ev'n laurels fade,—
Neglect of merit blunts the keenest blade.
No need of titles to exalt a name,
Emblazon'd high upon the list of fame.
War's dangers and fatigues, frequent defeats,
With all the evils that attend retreats,
Protect the citizen warm in his gown,
And recompence deserve without a frown.

Can gen'rous Britons what is due withhold,
That love their native freedom more than gold?
Justice forbid! who skill and courage shows,
Earns all his country gratefully bestows;
True patriotism noble deeds achieves,
And not a gift but just reward receives.

The young and old in little can agree,—
The first no ill, the latter much, foresee;
Their motives differ widely as their years;
Joys please the one, the other cherish fears;
Their maxims are at variance on the whole,
But in pursuit of profit have one soul.
Here opposition and contentions cease,
And foes unreconcil'd are here at peace.
Unhappy youth! who covet but to spend,
In ways, though flow'ry, that in ruin end.
Thousands love money, but indulgence more,
And waste their wealth in wine, or on a w——e:
Stop!—let not passion reason overrun;
Resist, you're safe; comply, you are undone.
Mark multitudes, who've run their race too soon,
Ere life assign'd to man had reach'd its noon.
Abuse not nature; each debauch deceives,
And in the constitution poison leaves.
Love liberty;—the dissolute are slaves,
And live in shameful bondage to their graves.

A hoary miser, season'd to his trade,
Shuns ev'ry vice, except one he has made;
Like Aaron's rod, this swallows all the rest,
Keen as a serpent gnawing in his breast.

To high esteem he justly might lay claim,
If in privations virtue were his aim;
Can selfishness to such a claim pretend,
That never sympathizes with a friend?

The mind, unsatisfy'd with present good,
Still tries to feed on unsubstantial food;
O'erlooks the blessings station'd near at hand,
And pants for those that at a distance stand.
Things just are good or evil as apply'd;
In the wrong use right reason is deny'd;
Though tyrant custom, that gives folly grace,
Vice recommends as fit for virtue's place.

Poor in itself, a meal gold cannot give,
But barter'd wisely is the way to live.
The strumpet gets a passport with her store,
And a chaste dame's the relic of the w——e:
Reform begins not till her custom ends,
So all her virtue on old age depends.
Oft as the limit of dull life appears,
The gold that hides her crimes excites her fears;
For past transactions leave no peace behind,—
No sweet reflections to compose the mind.
She barter'd virtue for a little wealth,
And got, as overplus, disease for health.
What can supply the loss of innocence,
Or be for conscious guilt a recompence?
Pride always sets the price of virtue low,
Adopts the fashions that for current go;
Though reason's wrong'd as well as common sense,
One end is serv'd, the world takes no offence:

Indecent usages command applause,
Consent obtain with all the force of laws;
As modest sure to lay the bosom bare;
A flimsy screen exposes all that's there;
When nothing else the vogue will recommend,
Consumers most the state and trade befriend.
Licentiousness corrupts a commonwealth,
As poison drank destroys the springs of health.

Vices, like cancers, at first little seem,
Uncheck'd their progress, soon with mischiefs teem;
Upright the heart that bad example spurns,
And all that's base in man to greatness turns.
Public spirit with private worth decays;
For loss of those what substitute repays?
The world has seen (O what a stupid world!)
By vice whole empires into ruin hurl'd.
With chastity all other virtues rise,
It sweetens and cements the social ties;
At home each husband, by his wife caress'd,
Feels no suspicion ramble in his breast;
Unbroke the union of domestic bliss,
The surest pledge of public happiness.

No wonder harlots walk with broad brass face,
As quite unconscious of incurr'd disgrace:
By lawless intercourse receipts are great,
Which gain respect where nothing's due but hate.
Unfaithful husbands break the marriage tie,
And give whores licence with their wives to vie.
On others' rights they scandalously seize,
Regardless whom they injure or displease;

As long as youth and beauty recommend,
For infamous reward their persons lend;
But beauty flies away on pleasure's wing,
And conscience after sleep is strong to sting.
The worth of virtue's badly weigh'd, when sold
For things that may be purchased with gold.
Pleasure's smooth stream deceives more than the main,
And few that sail there can a shore regain;
More fortunate than wary, some are brought
Thro' danger's gulf, and break the snare they sought;
But life's a heavy burden to the last;
The present pays for indiscretion past.
Signs of contrition, worn on the outside,
Ease not the mis'ry they attempt to hide.
As one that's bitten by a pois'nous snake,
To save his own the reptile's life must take;
So vice, that wounds the conscience, must be slain;
The sting extracted quiets inward pain.
The gain of prostitution cannot save
A strumpet's credit farther than the grave.
Despoil'd of all that propp'd her dubious fame,
What now remains but a polluted name?
Ev'n flatterers, upon her bounty fed,
Join in the common cry against her, dead.

The poor man's plea, without the aid of gold,
Has on the public mind a slender hold;
The very coat he wears will hurt his cause,
While the opponent's lace perverts the laws;
Though truth is clearly on his side, what then?
Advantage is in more esteem with men:

When sovereigns plead, 'tis needless to oppose,—
No strength of evidence protects the foes;
Success is certain on the rich man's part,
They blind the judgment and corrupt the heart;
Outweigh the scruples that should cast the scale,
And turn a court of justice to a sale.

Pride, to bring tribute, puts on various shapes,
Tho' void of all, yet ev'ry virtue apes;
Not for the sake of that, too hardly gain'd,
But for the reputation thus maintain'd:
Humility sits awkwardly on pride,
Light is the semblance, and soon laid aside:
When from her lofty seat she deigns to smile
On those below, and mingle with the vile,
The condescension is all mere grimace,
The aim's to get, and not bestow, a grace;
It is th' assumption of a lowly mien;
For self-importance still is plainly seen.
For generous deeds the heart is too confin'd,
When pride is the sole prompter to be kind.
Of favours small she makes a great parade,
In hopes, with int'rest, to be well repaid;
Pricks up her ears to catch the breath of fame,
Ev'n from their lips she would disdain to name;
But selfishness, averse the price to pay,
Must try to raise the wind some cheaper way.

The wealthy often find the praise refus'd
Which they would court by opulence abus'd.
'Tis not possession admiration draws,—
The proper use alone deserves applause.

The thousands squander'd by a spendthrift's hand
No more respect than hoarded store command.
The heart on riches would alone rely,
But finds their best to be a poor supply,
T' assuage the ardent longings of the soul,
And each unlucky accident controul.
The privilege of wealth's not understood,
But when 'tis made the instrument of good;
Yet names, emblazon'd with a coat of arms,
Than deeds of charity have greater charms;
And for the herald's ware there's such demand,
A purchaser will take't at second hand.
Wear gives it worth—its lustre brighter glows,
The farther back th' illustrious name arose:
But can the insignia of the great adorn
Degenerate heirs, more than the humble born?
A father's worth ennobles not the son,—
By deeds, and not descent, true honour's won.
To buy or borrow what's so much esteem'd,
Cannot in reason's eye a crime be deem'd.
Pre-eminence most eagerly is sought;—
The cost is great, but not too dearly bought.
The man's contemptible that seeks not praise,
And wastes in dull obscurity his days:
A noble spirit ever burns for fame,
And Erostratus still preserves a name!

When gold was sought to aid ambition's view,
And mark'd distinction on the owners drew,
Reason, degraded, soon forsook her throne,
And passion seiz'd the reins to rule alone,

Brought virtue's fairest form into disgrace,
And set up vice—well painted, in her place,
Whose merit solely in appearance lies,
Which cheats the vacant stare of vulgar eyes.

Misdeeds, that justly from esteem debar,
Are hid amidst the splendours of a star.
But common men, that apishly transgress,
Will feel keen censure tho' their faults be less;
They bear the burden in its fullest weight,
While little's laid upon the rich and great.
The man of wealth a licence has to sin,
Free from reproach without, and checks within;
The bugbear conscience is too mean a guide
For those that on the road of pleasure ride;
Where no obstructions can their course impede,
They break down bars, and travel at full speed.
A well-lin'd purse puts all into repair,
And gives to Quixotism a decent air;
Stamps folly wisdom, and excuses crimes,
That brought dishonour to the worst of times;
Rides reason down without a sense of shame,
As riches were superior to blame.
The giddy crowd who do not reason much,
No error see, or will not own it such;
Yet the best argument they have to plead,
Is that the rent-roll justifies the deed.
Their cas'istry is little more than this,
The mark is money, or you judge amiss;
The greater purse, just like the heavier scale,
In their sage estimation will prevail.

The merits of the case must here decide,—
The rich and poor—the good and bad, divide.
Thus wealth and worth with many are the same,
And poverty's unjustly link'd to shame.
The sportsman, that pursues his game in state,
Sees no obstruction in a five-bar gate;
May lay it level with the ground unblam'd,—
No harm is done, if Leapwell be not lam'd.
He's privileg'd by laws most wisely made;
Encroachment's just when statutes lend their aid.
Industry has no reason for complaint;
The lease from landlords takes off all restraint.
Roads made through fences and the grain destroy'd,
Good proofs that British freedom's still enjoy'd!
Resplendent colours that adorn the chace,
Reprove the black seen in so wrong a place.
Perhaps the shepherd has not lost his way,—
He but pursues the flock that runs astray:
Trespass, committed with a good design,
Deserves no censure, nor incurs a fine.

Behold a man that wants a way to thrive,
Whose small beginnings urge him to contrive;
He looks about him, and considers well,—
At last determines he will buy and sell;
And wisely thinks a fortune's sooner made,
By vending twenty things, than one, in trade;
Then sets about his plan without delay,
And, for an op'ning, fixes on the day.
To get a stock his head is full of schemes;—
By day he thinks on't, and by night he dreams.

The cheapest things, and those in most demand,
And likely not to hang long on his hand,
Best suit his purpose, and such like he buys,
With every caution, and his fortune tries.
'Tween hope and fear the interval he spends,
Until the day on which his fate depends.
His shop he opens in some obscure hole,
As if the wares he deals in all were stole.
No profit from appearances he gets,
Yet to the public view his trifles sets:
The tapes and threads hang scanty down the sash,
A sign to buyers not to cut a dash.
A few red herrings on a platter lie,
A double lure to catch the nose and eye.
Snuff and tobacco, too, assistance lend,
T' increase his substance and th' unthinking's spend:
The pins and needles, stuck in paper white,
The window garnish, and a sale invite;
With twenty other things in order plac'd;
For the arrangement shews he has some taste.
A three-legg'd table for a counter stands;
And so the master, waiting for commands.
The things go off but slowly at the first;
But then, his trade is at the very worst;
In a few days the matter gets abroad;
Soon many penny-buyers find their road
To the new shop,—it suits their turn of mind
And means to purchase, often much confin'd.
Whate'er they want, the master, blithe and free,
Most promptly gets, to give them liberty;
Receives a farthing as he would a pound,
And hearty thanks returns, at least in sound.

At other places, where demand is great,
Unnotic'd and unserv'd, they're forc'd to wait,
'Till better customers are sent away,
And none remains to make them longer stay.
Here a kind welcome meets them at the door;
Nor is regard withheld because they're poor.
Pleas'd with his carriage, and the purchase made,
Though not the best afforded by the trade,
They praise the man; the huckster's civil air
Gains a persuasion that his dealing's fair.
The plan already seems to meet his views,
Which he with unabating zeal pursues.
As trade increases, so he does his stock,
And keeps dame Fortune safe beneath a lock;
By wary steps prevents her freakish tricks;
Convinc'd for want of care a tradesman breaks.
He knows his business and the ways of men,—
Where one he had to buy, he now has ten.
His insight into trade begins t' expand,
And many springs of profit are at hand,
Which promise much to one that will not spare,
To work his way to riches by his care.
Impediments are now soon overcome;
For he can raise at will the needful sum;
Unhamper'd, briskly prosecutes his end,—
A tradesman that has money has his friend.
This new attempt to rise to higher things,
A change of situation with it brings:
A proper field of action is secur'd,
And all the labour cheerfully endur'd.
The prospect flatters,—rising hopes supply
New energy, and keep his spirits high.

The eagerness with which he eyes the prey,
O'erlooks all opposition in the way;
So bent on the acquirement of wealth,
He sacrifices comfort, ease, and health.
The golden phantoms, pleasant in his view,
Are realiz'd in thought, and fancied true;
Bargains are struck, so active is his mind,
That leave, at lowest, cent per cent behind.
He counts the gains of merchandize unsold,
And makes them greater ev'ry time they're told.
Of slow-pac'd time impatience takes the lead,
Laments the periods that retard its speed;
Into the future carries far his plan,
And hardly recollects he is a man.
Success attends th' extension of his trade,
Which helps to ease the trouble it has made.
The novelty amuses for a while,
And large returns much lighter make the toil.
Such close attendance he is forc'd to give,
He rather may be said to breathe than live.
To call in aid for him would still be worse,—
Who trusts his cares to others, trusts his purse:
His hands must do, and eyes see all things done,
Or else the whole would to confusion run.
The jealousy of misers never sleeps,
Unless the stronghold no deposit keeps;
But when so much on ev'ry side's at stake,
It is in all its watchfulness awake.
From morn to night no respite does he find;
And even then his work is far behind.
When men have left him, books demand his thought
Till the transactions of the day are wrote:

This mostly keeps him to a midnight hour,
And for refreshment leaves him little pow'r;
For nature with fatigue too much opprest,
Refuses needful food as well as rest.
His mind is so absorb'd in hoarding pelf,
He totally forgets 'tis for himself.
His motive's noble, and from censure free,
Who, 'midst abundance, lives in poverty,
T' enrich a world where he no peace can find,
And furnish greater bounties to mankind.
Self is his end, but still the mark is miss'd
Long as desires natural claims resist.
Then he will taste the produce of his pains,
When there's no prospect of enlarging gains.
Time is a talent that runs fast to waste;
How foolish then to disregard its haste;
The oversight of all that do not keep
An equal pace, and treasure up a heap,
In just proportion to the lapse of years,
And with their age run deeply in arrears.
To-day's too soon, the next may better spare
A season of some respite from his care;
To-morrow comes, but with it no release
From cares that give no interval of peace.
Though each revolving day augments his store,
Yet still the heart's as empty as before;
For what can fill the heart? can outward things?
One wish accomplish'd new desires brings;
When these are gratify'd, then others crave;—
A train of keen petitioners to the grave.
Each year's consumption leaves a profit fair,
Which household charges tenderly impair;

The treasure gain'd with raptur'd bosom views,
But much regrets the part he had to use;
What pity he's not nourish'd like a plant,
That gets, without expense, supplies for want!
To nature's call obedience he must pay,
Tho' most reluctant, and the cheapest way;
The bread and cheese,—his luxury, foretel
A future fortune, if he can but sell.
The daily labour and allowance short,
No constitution's able to support;
Care premature age brings on by stealth,
Nor gives him leisure to attend to health;
So pleas'd to see how well each scheme repays,
He takes no notice of his life's decays;
Reflection sleeps amid the warm employ,—
His bus'ness is to get, and not enjoy.
The passion for accumulation grows
Fast as the seasons for enjoyment close.
Life now is slavery, to amass a sum
For years of freedom that will never come.
The fear of want still calls exertion forth,
Nor looks at what he is already worth.
The day he spends in toil, the night in pain,
And finds an ample recompence in gain.
Much yet remains behind for him to do,
But nature sinks before he gets half through.
A small indulgence now might do him good;
But 'tis a sin to pamper flesh and blood.
Attention to the common wants of man
Defeats the purpose of his frugal plan.
To give whene'er the thriftless stomach needs,
Diminishes too much a week's proceeds.

'Tis better to put off a present call,
And make one meal responsible for all.
Th' affections cleave so ardently to gold,
The love of life has not so strong a hold;
The heart is loosen'd from all other ties;
And so for want of nourishment he dies;
A monument of folly unto all;
For who commends him, or laments his fall?
Men in his conduct see enough to blame,
Condemn it sagely, and do much the same.

A fortune hunter tries a diff'rent scheme,
To realize at once his golden dream.
A man of spirit scorns the plodding ways
The dull adopts, his consequence to raise.
'Tis pitiful to balance loss and gain,
And gives to noble blood a deeper stain,
Than, by the lady, to insult the lord;—
A point of honour settled by the sword;
The stigma's not eras'd without a fight,—
He meets his foe, and all again's set right.
This magic steel has purified more blood
Than all the potions taken since the flood:
A wonder-working instrument, most rare,
That, when disputes run high, can split a hair;
Cuts out the scandal of the blackest deeds,
And well for broken reputation pleads;
Rubs off arrears, and cancels ev'ry score,
Lest death, uncertain, should step in before:
All honourable claims are fully paid;—
Executors can settle debts of trade.

As stations vary, so does honour too;
The great despise what meaner men pursue.
That is a doubtful, though high-sounding word,
Whose meaning is defined by the sword.
The explanation's just when blood is spilt,—
A due atonement for imputed guilt.
Refusal's base, but to accept is brave;—
Fool-hardiness has oft white-wash'd a knave!
Is that true honour's undisputed place,
Where virtue justly apprehends disgrace?
First to commit, and then the crime defend,
Makes base beginnings justify the end.
Successful combat takes not guilt away;—
Swell'd is th' account beyond all means to pay.
By honour, then, revenge is clearly meant,
For cowards only no offence resent.
Forbearance, of true greatness is a sign,—
Can mercy with resentment e'er combine?
Does courage never an affront forgive?—
The crime is great that leaves no right to live.
Pride calls revenge by honour's softer sound,
And the assassin is with laurel crown'd.
What then is honour? a mere empty name,
By which the crafty rise, and hide their shame?
Not so; the title's always fairly won,
By all that manage well what's well begun;
Who follow duty, though it lead to loss,
And see a good conceal'd in ev'ry cross;
Whose virtue struggles laudably with ill,—
Maintains the contest, and is virtue still.
The poison'd arrows that fly thick around,
May strike the surface, but inflict no wound.

No sinister intention lurks below,
Above the best is done, but not for show;
Nor praise, nor censure, actuates the heart:
The point of honour is the honest part.

The heir has left him little but a name,
Which, like a mock, may catch unwary game.
Bold enterprizes give exertion scope,—
Dispatch expands the tender flow'r of hope.
Inaction, now, infallibly would lose
The only chance he has to keep his clothes.
Should fortune, for a while, the project blast,
The greys he runs will speed'ly run him fast;
For creditors have mem'ries most correct,
And will the day of payment recollect:
But equipage, and high bred politesse,
Than modest virtue promise more success.
When game is up, who'd not obey the call,
And bravely run the risk of neck and all?
A desp'rate leap, where danger lurks below,
Serves but the spirit of the chace to show:
The hazards run to take a silly hare,
May well be blam'd, if any he can share
Are not approv'd: an heiress is the prize,
Whose wealth's important in a stripling's eyes.
High pedigree's a station, like a sign,
That needs the help of gold to make it shine.
Unburnish'd names attract but few to gaze,
While splendid outsides admiration raise.
A hundred thousand promises much good,—
'Twill suit his birth, and this improve her blood.

A fortune with a female ne'er comes wrong;—
'Tis like the voice that beautifies a song
Of vulgar phrase; the dullest measures please,
And dogg'rel's lost in elegance and ease.
Thus a good portion recommends a bride:
Its use continues when she's laid aside.
Plebeian mixtures but defile the race,
When there's no gold to cancel the disgrace.
To prop a house, just falling from its stand,
And save a name to dignify the land,
A line of ancestors, for cent'ries back,
Prefers his claim before the rival pack;
Address and courage, too, unite their aid
To give him full possession of the maid:
Competitors perceive the contest vain,
And yielding, leave him victor in the train.
The goddess, married, feels a mortal's woe;
Respect and fortune lost his motive shew.
At leisure, now, he pillages the dame,
And covers all transgression with a name.

All are full conscious of their littleness,
Which they would hide beneath the pomp of dress.
Frailty concealment finds in vain disguise,—
A triumph over reason by the eyes.
Mothers for daughters cannot charms bespeak;
Some hapless maids have ev'ry grace to seek:
Their personal defects must be supplied,
And fashion's best expedients are tried:
But even beauties have deficiencies,
And put on needless ornaments to please.

Who're favour'd most—the handsome or the plain?
Those often miss, what these, more modest, gain.
Dress is becoming—modesty the guide;—
Wrong is the aim of vanity and pride.
Distinctions rarely point out high and low;—
A man of fortune's plainer than the beau.
Consistency should mark each station here,
And ev'ry grade in proper garb appear.
Capricious fashion has supreme command,
And blindfold leads all classes in the land.
In flippancy and finery jilts exceed;
'Tis in politeness ladies take the lead.
Defeated is the proper use of clothes,
If the pretence to hide is to expose.
Some wearers have no purposes unchaste,
But mere compliance with the reigning taste:
Yet spotless innocence, in slight attire,
May soon be sullied, if not set on fire.
Passion finds entrance through unnumber'd ways;
But prudence shuts all op'nings from his gaze.
Virtue's fine feeling dreads the smallest fault,
And dares not trust herself to an assault.
The strongest citadel, without a guard,
Invites assailment to its gates unbarr'd.
All treasures here become an easy prey;—
Defenders false their sacred trust betray.

The hour of op'ning's near for men in trade,
And profits now may lawfully be made.
Soon customers for gaudy robe contend,
And the sly dealer finds in each a friend.

His goods go off at an immod'rate price;
So cheap are sov'reigns when they purchase vice.
The things he deals in serve no better end;—
Virtue's in danger when her foes defend.
With base designs too many wear a veil;—
Half-cover'd bosoms set their charms to sale.
Prudes covet admiration but to spurn:
Tho' cold themselves, are pleas'd when others burn.
But tender youth, susceptible of love,
Mistake the falcon for a turtle dove;
As birds, incautious, flutter through the air,
Are taken captive in an open snare.
W——s are adepts in managing decoys,
And draw the simple into lawless joys.
The merchant knows not how his goods are us'd;—
If us'd at all, he knows they are abus'd.
All self-reproach with ease he can dismiss,—
To husband money is his highest bliss.
Whatever damage purchasers sustain,
Their voluntary choice brings all the pain.
'Tis optional to sell, or cheap or dear;—
The market's open,—other shops are near:
No trespass is he guilty of in trade;—
His merchandise of finest texture made,
What's furnish'd to encourage vice or pride,
No vendor's guiltless, setting price aside.
Artful deceivers know their game, and place
Most confidence in furbelows and lace.
Aware of the simplicity of youth,
They easily pass off falsity for truth;
Affect sweet innocence by crafty smiles,
And hold the dupes entangled in their wiles:

In deep-laid stratagems, too seldom fail,
And dearly sell their favours by retail.
The cob-web fabrics that his shop adorn,
Are only by the fashionable worn:
Such merchandise is readily retail'd;—
'Tis more esteem'd the less some parts are veil'd.
Full oft the world in opposition stands
Against the rigour of divine commands:
Short is debate; allurement's dearly sold,
And conscience sleeps composedly with gold.

To modesty have people no pretence?
This is, perhaps, an age of innocence;
For nakedness in paradise prevail'd,
Before transgression shame on man entail'd.
The virtue of the times must then be great,
Since EVE's fair daughters closely imitate
Her first condition, enviable lot!
But have her brightest character forgot!

A high per-centage from his traffic's made;
But canker's in the gain of unfair trade.
The robber's gold, though coined in the mint,
Soon melts away, so little good there's in't.
Perhaps there's virtue in the charge he makes;—
His traffic's thus confin'd to jilts and rakes.
How kind to free the modest from expense,
Whose poverty protects their innocence!
Recourse to aids that modesty detests,
Attempts to turn her maxims into jests;
But these give lights sufficient to expose,
How much reliance some place on their clothes.

What ground for hope that success could ensue,
Were fools not num'rous, and the wise so few?
The heart, averse from sinister designs,
Dress out of character by choice declines;
Withdraws from groups where black-tongu'd slander stains,
And safely keeps what innocency gains;
Well satisfied that ev'ry step is right,
Directed and approv'd by reason's light.
Conscience, unhurt, partakes of heavenly bliss,
And ascertains a future world from this.
Nor gold, nor pleasure, shakes his purpose firm,
Fast bound to virtue for life's longest term.
Angels rejoice,—so feels celestial birth,
That kindred spirits still are found on earth:
Pris'ners below, not rigidly confin'd,—
Free to discharge the proper part assign'd;
Extract from evil all the good they can;
And live but to serve God by serving man.
True piety appears when conduct's fair,
And helpless lazars timely mercy share;
Reason's abus'd, and revelation too,
If hearts urge not the hands good deeds to do.
False is profession that but words excites,—
Right faith is feeling, and in works delights.
What mean addresses to the throne above,
When man, God's image, shares not in our love?
Compassion, prompt to heal each wretch's sore,
Is service done to Him whom we adore;
Warm-hearted pity grieves for deep distress,
And heav'n's good angel ministers redress.

The miser's soul, close shut up as his gold,
Melts not, like ice congeal'd by polar cold.
Kind Providence's gifts on him are lost,
By gross mismanagement perversely cross'd.
His heart keeps all, a nucleus for dross,—
Fit emblem of the stone that gathers moss.
A grateful sense for good receiv'd is shown,
When the receiver thinks it not his own;
Distributes freely of the means possess'd,
And, blessing others, feels himself more bless'd:
The friend of man as long as life remains;—
Wealth so applied, the highest int'rest gains.

Who thinks the prudent use of money loss,
May well be said to take his daily cross.
True penance to perform no pains he spares;—
More than the austerities of DOM'NICK bears.
All self-denial merits only shame,
If avarice, not virtue, be the aim.
Within, without, he mortifies himself,
And duty binds him to withhold his pelf
From those that revel in the beggar's shift:
They only seek to misapply a gift.
Their plight, indecent, is a false disguise,
From the compassionate to draw supplies.
Were he the model none would need to give:
All, on his plan, might make a shift to live
Want has no plea, although it plead most hard
To rouse his feelings, or excite regard
For the distress that others seem to bear,
Since he himself has not the smallest share.

His own condition keeps his conscience free
From all reproof, for who wants more than he?
He daily drinks of penury the dregs;
Who can do more that lives on what he begs?
And charity at home should first begin,
If he would shun of cruelty the sin;
But he nor sin, nor cruelty, perceives,
While what he saves his craving soul relieves;
All other cares are swallow'd up in this:
So mis'ry takes precedency of bliss!
Can it be, then, a duty to bestow
A gift on one that feels not half his woe?
If but a few the beggar's plea befriend,
He gets enough to answer ev'ry end;
To-day's demands he tries not to exceed,
And trusts the future to supply his need.
The Miser has a larger wish to fill,—
A boundless wish, that baffles all his skill:
Like IXION'S wheel, he ev'ry scheme turns round,
But what his labour seeks for is not found;
With ceaseless toil desire is ne'er fatigu'd,
So closely are the heart and riches leagu'd.
Success exertion only stimulates:
As means increase, expenditure abates;
If self-denial be a virtue, heav'n
Was ne'er to one so meritorious giv'n.
This abstinence is of no common cast—
It truly may be call'd a daily fast;
His greatest doings, in a festive way,
Would shame the poor-house on a scanty day.
Brooms, coals, and candles—useful now-a-days—
For such conveniences he nothing pays;

Good substitutes he finds in ev'ry fence,—
The paltry plunder saves him some expense.
To give before a man is out of debt,
Is to mock justice, and no credit get:
Imprudent bounty must incur the blame
Of fraud on those that have a lawful claim.
Debts undischarg'd, in characters most fair,
Are written on his clothes and meagre stare.
'Tis not because his creditors are slow
To make their claims, and honest statements shew:
They dun him ev'ry day without avail;—
He puts them off, and holds them all at bail.
His own necessities, so multiplied,
Set other claimants for relief aside;
Their suff'rings cannot work upon his heart,
Who on himself bestows so small a part.
The sacred treasure swells before his eyes,
And feasts the sense that lessons not its size.
The only pleasure (can it so be call'd?)
The tyrant grants that has his soul enthrall'd.
He's not the owner, but the slave, of gold,
Whose priv'lege is, at most, to guard its hold.
'Tis safe enough in a strong coffer kept,
Yet seldom has the keeper soundly slept.
Care's best expedient cannot quiet fear;—
It danger apprehends when none is near;
A great mistake!—precaution's often cross'd,—
'Tis always near when money may be lost.
A master, most ungrateful to obey,
Whose mercy is as little as its pay.
So captivated by the shining chains,
He smiles to see them strengthen'd by his gains:

At last is the ascendancy complete;—
He gives up ev'ry charge from head to feet:
Each thing he puts on the delusion shews,
And now more meanly than a pauper goes!

The widow's tears, that tell the deepest grief,
And burst their prison to obtain relief;
Old age, decrepid, leaning on a stay,
To prop up weakness in the smoothest way;
The fatherless, bereft of ev'ry friend,
Want to supply, and innocence defend,
Mistakes each stranger's for a parent's face,
And looks impatient for the fond embrace.
Delusive hope!—no parent's face it sees,
Nor shares caresses on a father's knees!
All plead in vain;—regardless of distress,—
Of pity void, he offers no redress!
His heart is hard,—a sympathetic glow
Nor warms't, nor softens't, for another's woe.
Care, posted centinel fast by his hoard,
Heeds none that wants, though earnestly implor'd.
Gold gets an idol's honour in his hands;—
A slave indulg'd soon like a God commands.
He daily homage pays, without constraint,
And free-will offerings signalize the saint.
No sacrilege upon his conscience lies,
That, faithful to his trust, a martyr dies.

Thus time and talent both are misapplied;—
No profit his,—the public's is denied.
None to society can be a friend,
That gathers money nor to use nor spend;

This only would add trouble to his care:
He leaves the spending to a thriftless heir.
Penuriousness incurs the greatest blame,
Nature defrauds, and reason puts to shame.
Economy must not be class'd with this,—
Good managers aim well, and rarely miss
The mark of prudence; wisely regulate
Expenditure, and saving to their state.

Of what contexture is the miser's heart?
Or does it beat near the external part
Where pockets belly with the precious store,
Whose chink, responsive, charms at ev'ry pore?
Sure something's in't, for they who like it best,
Bestow their purses nearest to the breast,
Which, like a plaster, stimulate the blood,
And send through ev'ry vein a bounding flood.

Behold him in the street, with solemn gait,
As if each step were laden with his fate.
On either hand he leaves the busy throng,
And on th' uneven pavement lags along;
Afraid, should he the flags with others share,
The stinted two-pence may escape his care;—
The two-pence destin'd for a purchase great,—
A fusty sausage, or some stinking skate.
But if the quality be not the best,
The bulk makes up for what it wants in taste.
His eyes, afraid to look abroad, are prone,
Intent in marking ev'ry level stone
To set his foot on, not so much for ease,
(For savings have far greater charms to please)

As to prevent his shoes from wearing out,—
A charge too heavy to escape his thought;
For shoes, however old, may well be worn,
Although they breed on ev'ry toe a corn.
Corns may be cut out cheaply when they pain,
But what's a recompense for lessen'd gain?
This path of safety, chosen for the best,
Has disadvantages much like the rest.
By joining with the crowd you risk your purse,
And loss of that than loss of life is worse.
Dust-carts and barrows, and the carman's lash,
Are frequent evils, but they touch no cash.
Hard-hearted coachmen scour along the street,
Regardless of each passenger they meet.
Full oft he's driven from his fav'rite road,
But this he minds not when the pass is broad.
In narrow lanes, when the uncivil dray
Drives inoffensive trav'llers from their way,
He patiently submits to stop his pace,
And take the kennel as his safest place.
Through many rubs the destin'd port he gains,
Where penny bargains recompense his pains.
A prigger tight, that cheapens ere he buys;—
Abatements small in time to something rise.
But if the huckster must in full be paid,
He cheats himself of what he would the trade.
A few odd scraps—he seldom goes to pounds—
Confine the purchase to accustom'd bounds.
Such short allowance borders close on sin:
If there's no guilt without, 'tis great within.
Strict parsimony governs at his meals;
Unheard are all the stomach's loud appeals.

What much augments the sufferer's distress,
There are no means to bring about redress.
Poor is the chance to gain a rightful cause,
When guilt protection finds in partial laws.
Defeat would follow in the courts above,—
He'd draw his teeth, and then insolvent prove!
But comfort take; though hapless be thy case,
Thy wrongs are deeply graven in the face
Of the lank thief; his infamy is known,
To aggravate the pain that's all his own.
The bargain's struck and money must be paid,
An irksome, this, but needful part of trade.
The pieces in his pocket linger long,
Between his heart and them the tie's so strong:
Reluctantly they leave the half-clench'd hand,
As they were conscious of caresses bland.
From long acquaintance an attachment springs—
This oft occurs between unequal things—
Kept long and safe within his close-shut fob
He better loves them than an upright job.
But reputation forces them away;
Scores are made honest only by its sway,
Whose conscience owns no other law to pay.
Then home he goes, with caution in his stare,
For all his soul is swallow'd up by care:
'Tis needless, now, for the light-finger'd folks
On empty pockets practise not their jokes:
And what he carries, rather would disgust,
E'en the half-famish'd, than excite their lust.
We'll dog him closely to his sorry hut,
And entrance gain before the door is shut:

The same precaution broods upon his thought,
Lodg'd safe at home, as when expos'd without.

Aim higher, muse, inglorious 'tis to creep
On earth so low,—celestial honours reap:
A bold achievement well becomes your name,—
Green is the trophy of hard-earned fame!
Disdain dull sloth,—prepare for exercise,—
On wing advent'rous soar towards the skies:
Up to yon garret window take a flight,
And boldly dare to gain the awful height.
Ten story high demands a decent hop,
Though 'twill not land you on Parnassus' top.
The passage there will purify your wings
From the contagion of all lower things.
Here, undisturb'd, he holds his lofty seat,
That overlooks the rabble in the street.
'Tis wisely fix'd between the earth and sky,
T' escape the notice of each idle eye:
For practices, that differ much from men,
May fairly seek concealment from their ken.
This station, chosen with a good intent,
Is quite convenient on the score of rent:
His saving by the year, perhaps a crown,
Rewards him well for trailing up and down:
Besides, the beggars, that ne'er climb up stairs
To dun his door, and prick his ears with pray'rs,
Might now and then torment him to bestow,
Though loath, a farthing, if he liv'd below.
Assessors, bent on errands for the state,
Miss none that's likely to afford a rate.

He nothing risks—they open but the door
To be convinc'd he musters with the poor.
More may be said to justify his choice,
And reasons urg'd that speak with firmer voice;
His tender conscience shuns the ways of sin;
As well the outward, as the crimes within.
The luxury of dress, and that of meat,
Can hardly reach him in this safe retreat;
Disdaining, then, the vices of his kind,
He seeks associates suited to his mind,
And strives to change his nature to another
More innocent, and calls the daw his brother.
If this agreement's not so easily seen,
A parallel will shew what is between.
The rent-free tenant dwells aloft in air,
Where little's spent to keep walls in repair;
The less there's done this way he's better pleas'd,—
His neighbour, too, because his rent is eas'd.
Silver, they say, can human language teach,
And on the dumb confer the gift of speech!
Jack, neither famous for his voice nor song,
A crooked piece, works wonders with his tongue!
Nor he alone with this rare gift is blest,
On others too the virtue is impress'd;
Our hero seldom utters forth a sound,
As if his mouth by a lost key were bound,
Till all persuasive silver break the charm,
Unlock the jaws, and ev'ry organ arm
With the artillery of words and wind,
And all the pow'rs of utterance combin'd;
The energetic language pours along,
And worth acquires from the impressive tongue.

Thus, civil courts, where justice should be found,
In a bad cause with eloquence resound.
When fees are small, the pleader's tone is weak;
The spur is wanting that would make him speak,
Acutely urge his knowledge in the law,
And prove his client's claim without a flaw.
One destiny their genius must have spun,
So much their talents in one channel run:
Each takes his turn to pilfer and cajole,
And for the prize each has a hiding hole.
Nor e'en in this have they a diff'rent aim,
But act alike from motives much the same.
The one amasses gold with no less toil
Than he that digs it in a barren soil.
Although his labours for requital crave,
He gets as little profit as the slave.
The other has no call for spoons and rings,—
A hardware shop of fifty useless things.
Their gettings keep more sacred than an oath,—
And thus the public suffers by them both.
Such dealings soon, without the bankrupt's aid,
If follow'd much, would dry the springs of trade.
The petty villain, on the king's highway,
Takes a few guineas, not his own, to-day:
To-morrow they their liberty obtain,
And pass into the common stock again.
The law that hangs him for the public weal,
Should not be slow to punish all that steal.
The jackdaw's conduct justice must decry,—
To make amends, a patriot let him die.
A scarecrow made some services may yield,
By fright'ning depredators from the field.

The wretch that cheats himself of needful food,
Has only one way now of doing good:
In life he has no purpose to be kind;—
His death will favour kindred left behind.
A disinheritance they need not fear,—
From such a deed th' expence will keep him clear.
His soul as madness would this act detest,—
To spend a part to give away the rest!
Law must at least assign each claimant's part,
And take what, living, would have broke his heart.
No thanks to him that grasp'd the useless hoard
Long as he could,—against his will restor'd
To its right use: from hand to hand it goes,
And each remove substantial good bestows.

Gold, heap'd together, just like manure spread,
Will prove a blessing when the hoarder's dead.
No urgent call could tempt him to befriend,—
He kept his bounty whole to grace his end!
Heirs may put on a sorrowful outside,
Yet joy he never gave them till he died.

Here comes a beggar, sparingly put on,
For changes of the seasons he has none;
Since for a garment he put on a sack,
No whim of fashion has disgrac'd his back.
To this privation he submits by will,—
It serves his turn and no way does him ill:
For nakedness—he minds not this to hide—
Compassion moves, and sets out-lays aside.
Two points important to the wretch that lives,
Upon the scanty pittance pity gives.

These well requite him for the want of dress;—
His gains are greater if his comfort's less.
But comfort to a man in tatter'd clothes,
From other sources than his habit flows.
Th' extremes of heat and cold his hide defies:
In winter freezes, and in summer fries!
He bears this hardship but to line his coat,
Which, sold in rag fair, would not bring a groat.
His purpose is a snug inside to screen,
And let the beggar's badge be only seen.
'Tis true, the lining's neither warm nor good,
But then, 'tis got as cheaply as his food;
And though it prove no shelter from the cold,
It yields the comfort of unused gold.
That to convenience makes a wrong pretence
Which lays him open to the least expense.
The frugal man has a far better shift,
('Tis the prime maxim in his art of thrift,
That money spent is just as good as lost)
And lines his coat without a penny cost.
The farthings glean'd soon mount to better stuff,
And furnish lining for his coat enough.
Each piece, with jealous care, is hemm'd about,
To keep an int'rest in as well as out.
The thick-set patches a round sum conceal,
And all the guise of wretchedness reveal.
To keep an int'rest in! the man of pelf
Contrives a hundred ways to cheat himself.
His banker pays him not a rate per cent.,
As is the custom upon money lent;
Yet is his cash for that not more secure,
Nor are the risks of failure render'd fewer.

Unlike the banks, that break for want of stock,
Too much, alone, gives here the fatal shock!
Be sure his banker cannot long sustain
The growing burden of his weekly gain.
While thus his cash he husbands up in rags,
And saves, indeed, the charge of canvas bags,
The load he carries, though it snugly lies,
Affords for patience no bad exercise;
And makes him feel, as more is on him laid,
That blessings misapplied a curse are made.
This, as his sin sits closer than his clothes,
Like penitents of old, contrition shews;
Who, in their dreams of merit, wore a mesh
Of iron made, to mortify the flesh.
The zealot's whim stands on this plea excus'd,
For future good he present ease refus'd.
Both present ease and future good are giv'n
Up by the wretch whose back bears all his heav'n.
A volunteer in mis'ry, he forgoes
The comfort of his station for its woes,
And in the parish poor-house ends his days,
Which takes his purse, and for a coffin pays.
Some compensation for the loss sustain'd;
For all his stock was from the public drain'd.

The man that gathers gold, as matrons delf,
But to be seen—and only by himself—
A glorious sight—pursues some sleeveless aim,
That beggars language for a proper name.
Gold is his all,—his mistress and his friend;—
His ways and means look to no other end.

Free from distraction, it has all his heart,—
What can the fondest lover more impart?
The bounds of friendship are too much confin'd
For the expansion of his gen'rous mind.
He feels the lively flame of friendship burn,
Without, the common fuel of friends, return.
His thoughts are bent on raising such a sum,
In hopes of recompence in time to come,
When there shall be enough to use a part,
And plenty left to satisfy the heart.
Delusion strange! desire takes the lead,—
The golden spur applied still mends its speed.
His wish accomplish'd, still the heart expands,—
Takes in the whole,—and from it keeps its hands.
A farthing taken from the sacred heap,
Is death to him who has the charge to keep.
'Tis not enough,—nor ever will be so;
For as it grows, so does his passion grow.
His care increases as he adds and ekes;
And thus he gets the recompense he seeks.
Like a distemper in some mortal part,
The more it pains the nearer 'tis his heart.
His care to get would be a better trade,
Were it but easier by the practice made;
But daily practice lessons not the pains,
For the next care is, how to keep his gains:
And this demands still greater skill and thought,
Than the obtaining what is merely sought:
The out-lets for it cannot all be stopp'd,
Though many nat'ral claims are wholly dropp'd.
His back and belly, to obtain relief,
Should get the churl arrested for a thief.

Their daily dues so niggardly he grants,
'Tis but to own, and not supply their wants.
Such violation of a sacred trust,
Against the helpless, highly is unjust.
The legislature ought to give redress,
And extricate the suff'rers from distress:
For when their murmurs cannot be but heard,
Still to the court of patience they're referr'd.
The law of justice should assistance lend,
And from oppression innocence defend,
Should put him out a second time to nurse,
And manage, in minority, his purse.
The law becomes the guardian of an heir,
Whose incapacity demands its care.

In ev'ry class your misers may be found,—
Sometimes the front—but chiefly the back ground
They occupy by choice, and slink behind,
As those before may drop what they may find,
And meet the harm they wisely seek to shun:
They'd share the plunder, but no danger run.
To save expense they take the lowest place,
And thus derive a profit from disgrace.
As figures in a picture, scarcely seen,
Half-hid in shade, or shadow'd out in green,
Are seldom notic'd by the common eye
And to the critic only open lie.

The bold advent'rer shuffles in a game,
Where gain and loss are by no means the same:
For where one makes a fortune in this way,
A dozen for their rashness dearly pay.

But misers chuse a safer way, and find
Dame Fortune nor capricious, nor blind,
But gifted with a strong discerning sight,
Her predilections to direct aright,
And guide her hand among the urgent crew,
That crave for blessings to the favour'd few.
True misers nothing risk from wild extremes;
No changes unforeseen can mar their schemes.
When prices rise on necessary food,
Meals are abridg'd to make their savings good.
Apparel comes to little, dearest sold,—
No change of fashion can supplant the old:
For doctors' bills are never put to cost,—
Wise nature best prescribes when health is lost.
In speculation, wary steps pursue,—
Old and approv'd, they seldom try the new.
Thus safely seated on the steady nave,
Poor must the lot be if they cannot save.
The ups and downs are little in the main,
Since they are plac'd within the sphere of gain:
And often as the fickle wheel revolves,
They gather grease that on the axe dissolves.

Characters differ widely as the face,
Nor is it easy the true cause to trace.
The sober father owns a froward son,
Whose conduct contradicts all he has done;
Though rich in wisdom and prudential ways,
The offspring from his good example strays.
Disparities appear 'mong nearest kin,
And sometimes features tell what is within.

Uncertain law; one face reflects another,
While disposition varies in each brother.
That countenance, cast in the fam'ly mould,
Conceals within a preference for gold.
This mien, benign, expressively discreet,
Much promise shews a parent's wish to meet;
The love of pleasure, ripen'd full, when ag'd,
Defaces all his younger years presag'd.
Wise tutorage the nat'ral bias turns,
And hence, a cruel heart with mercy burns.
Tempers as difficult to check as pride,
Are overcome, and chang'd to virtue's side.
Born to inheritance (the due reward
Of martial exploits on the gore-dy'd sward,
Or painfully acquir'd by traffic fair,
And kept most sacred by each prudent heir
Through generations past) a worthless race,
Who honourable ancestry disgrace,
And squander lavishly what virtue gain'd,
With all the marks of dissipation stain'd,
Are not far distant from the jailor's gate.
In dotage, or bad policy, the state,
(Compassionate and kind to the forlorn,
Her own adopted, if but highly born:
Out-doing the old Roman law, that meant
To take the spendthrift's part, ere all was spent)
Upon their meet repentance, pity shews,
And largely deals out bounty to her foes.
Repentance meet!—there's no dispute of which,
Since self-denial goes to such a pitch;
Health, houses, lands, they do so well begin,
Are offer'd up to pay the debt of sin!

As foes, they follow th' unbeliever's rule,
And learn their lesson in the atheist's school;
Whose arguments so hammer'd and tongue-toss'd,
Like beaten gold, the weight they had have lost.
Their aim is better than the shot they send;
This on the outside does its vengeance spend,
That hits the mark, successful in attack,
And daubs the garment that's already black.
Ill-fated colour, that disgusts the view;
Exchange it for a less offensive hue,
Ye cloth'd in sable!—libertines to please,
A lighter will their troubled conscience ease.
Nothing so much alarms their guilty fear,
As signals of a future reck'ning near.
No longer scare in such repulsive dress,
Good nature may check spite, if not repress.
Untarnish'd innocence, as virgin snows,
Blunts not the censure of invet'rate foes;
Your grave habiliments excite their spleen,
But virtue makes their vices better seen.
Walk resolutely in the proper path,
Fear no one's umbrage, nor the scorner's wrath.
Strong advocates for change, they nonsense prate,
To overturn the fabric of the state;
By time and wisdom to perfection rais'd,
Of foes the envy,—by the candid prais'd;—
Bulwark of liberty, a sacred pile,
Whose sanctity unhallow'd hands defile.
Who manage badly in a narrow sphere,
Must not presume to mend the matter here.
Repentant now for all their bitter spite,
They much bewail their former want of light.

A pension or a place such proof unrols,
As settle all the doubts of sceptic souls,
Who principles, just like a coat put off,
And now contend for what they us'd to scoff.
Thus metals base the use of gold supplant—
Their colour only gives the worth they want.

The beggar, sure, has not the meanest plea
For hoarding up the boons of charity;—
One day brings gain, another but abuse—
On such occasions savings are of use:
The scraps he gathers, and the farthings rare,
Make up a stock where little is to spare;
And if from short allowance aught remains,
Of no one's means he makes his little gains.
Who's he that gives his means to feed the poor?—
Whatever many squander on a whore!—
On this allegement he acquitted stands,
That charity may fail, and close her hands.
If this poor plea, then, be the beggar's best,
What must the wealthy man's be that's possess'd
Of acres, more in number than the scroll
That gives him firm possession of the whole,
Words comprehends, not spar'd, a full cramm'd skin,
Which starves the bellies of his nearest kin?
Here the sage scribe has all his art display'd,
Incroachments to prevent from being made:
As wings, and feet, and fins, might favour flight,
To guard them closely is both wise and right;
And ev'ry hovel, hedge, and outside sewer,
Are bound in legal fetters quite secure.

Thus girls, at school, their samplars hem about,
To keep the things within from straying out:
The frail inclosure soon lets go its charge—
Time breaks the fence, and sets them all at large.
His nearest kin they cannot hope for aid,
Upon himself as great restraints are laid;—
The yearly purchase, and the law's demand,
But little leave for present use in hand.
The year is brought about with fifty pounds,
Except what's cheaply drawn from nets and hounds:
His ponds, oft dragg'd, a small supply afford,
Yet quite sufficient for his frugal board;
And now and then a silly partridge comes,
As if by chance, into his net of thrums,
And gives her life, with patriotic breast,
(What patriot could more?) to save the rest!
For while he takes at all, however few,
He never thinks of buying one that's new.
If both these fail him, as is oft the case,
There's still another chance left in the chace.
His greyhounds lank, a pitiful resource,
Cut only a mean figure in the course:
The man is wrong to keep a heavy breed—
It is not strength, but weakness spoils their speed;
They eat 'tis true, but then so badly fare,
If out of twenty run they take a hare,
Without credulity, one might insist,
On this one fact, that miracles exist.
Small recompence is due for niggard loans—
They leave his spit as naked as their bones.
Not disconcerted soon, the game pursues,
And sometimes prospers e'en beyond his views.

The raven's croaking may revive his hopes,
Or chance direct his wand'rings to a copse,
Where lies some victim of great nature's law,
Not too far gone to tempt the hungry maw.
If conscience check the hand that lifts a knife,
To rob a harmless animal of life,
'Tis meritorious, then, to eat the food
By heaven slain, and shun the guilt of blood.
When means are great, the end, whate'er it be,
Can not excuse a life of penury.
His comings-in, on ev'ry half-year day,
For fifty years' expence would amply pay:
This, in such hands, is turn'd to good account—
His charges lessen as his rentals mount;
Compound addition is the fav'rite rule
Most closely studied since he came from school.
The acres ek'd so often by the score,
Must soon, in length, extend from shore to shore;
And thus his land, between two seas bestow'd,
Will from the heathen pantheon drive a god;
For Neptune, setting up his three-fang'd fork,
May take the place, and do the other's work!
What's Alexander's, or great Cæsar's name?—
A world half-empty'd made more room for fame!
They mortals conquer'd who with mortals fought;
But here a mortal sets a god at nought.
Let TERMINUS contented quit his right—
Each in the sacred group meets equal slight:
Of polytheism he acquitted stands,
But breaks, by gold, the first of all commands.
Should this man live to old Methus'lah's age,
What could escape him on the earth's wide stage;

He'd grasp the whole ere half his race was run,
Nor even then would half his work be done;—
Lord of the earth, he'd try to scale the skies,
And plunder heaven of its golden eyes.
As gold, those orbs would please his selfish mind,
More than as agents blessing all mankind.
Vain man!—a foe, (more cruel than the lord
Who chain'd the Lydian king amidst his hoard,
Whose fate was little alter'd, on the whole,
As golden shackles long had chain'd his soul),
Whom thou canst not escape, will stay thy hand
Within the compass of six feet of land—
Unclench thy gripe that holds the gilded store,
And little leave it, as it leaves the poor!

Much to possess, and not a part enjoy,
But still in getting more the whole employ,
Is to divide the *agent* from its *use*,
And load their proper union with abuse:
This take away, of that what can you make?
To give it value is a gross mistake.
A stone, for instance, in a ditch is set,
I step upon it, and escape the wet;
Now take it up, and throw it by again,
What was it then?—what is it now?—explain.
A stone, you'll say,—'tis neither less nor more:
You err,—it was a stepping-stone before,
And useful in its place;—aside now thrown
Both name and use—it merely is a stone.
Just is the application—lock'd-up store
Is but a stone that was a step before.

A piece of gold its currency obtains
But from the stamp which public credence gains;
Not from the stamp;—weight is its worth alone,
And gets indeed a passport from the throne;
Still in itself no constant worth is found,—
This alters greatly as it passes round:
The things you purchase change its value much,
Which shrinks or swells at ev'ry market's touch;—
Goods are its measure, and a fall or rise
Dependent is on large or small supplies.
Unstable gold, as fickle as the moon,
May wax and wane, and change again ere noon:
Unfalsify'd and sanctioned by the state,
Its use for public purposes is great;
On ev'ry class convenience bestows,
And round the world dispensing favours goes.
T' affirm that gold can e'er its value change,
Is to advance a paradox most strange;
A guinea's worth in shillings twenty-one,
And or to rise or fall is never prone;
To day it brings the same, to-morrow will,
And cent'ries hence will be a guinea still.
Go to the market—price a bit of fish,—
'Tis cheap enough, and proves a frugal dish:
Within a day or two, five groats or more
Will hardly buy what cost a groat before.
Now *here* the ebb of money is so shoal,
A quarter *there* is better than the whole.
A haddock even, or a herring, shews
How much the tide of money ebbs and flows.
A guinea's value is the rate per stone,
And not the tale of shillings twenty-one.

A keen forestaller, in a scanty year,
Knows better what is meant by cheap and dear;
Instead of twenty shillings for a boll,
He wrings full forty from the neediest soul;
Then to assuage the sores in conscience made,
Persuades himself 'tis all an honest trade:
Saint-like, he aids just Providence's plan,
That sends a dearth to punish sinful man:
The penance he imposes fills his purse,
And draws a blessing from a public curse.
Thus eats a glutton what would well dine four,
And blames the host for serving up no more.

'Tween king and beggar what a gap to trace!
Yet inclinations narrow much the space;
The station's diff'rent, but the man's the same,
If in their actions they've no diff'rent aim:—
What marvel! On a time 'twas JOVE'S mishap,
To tumble from the skies into the lap
Of a frail mortal, in a show'r of gold,
And basely purchas'd what was cheaply sold.
Besure, the Thund'rer, from Olympus' height,
Encumber'd too beneath a golden weight,
To DANÆ'S prison, on the humble land,
Had a most pithy journey on his hand;
But then, the weight he carry'd gave him speed,
Deceiv'd the distance, and excus'd the deed.
Thus ancient poets told a world of lies:—
How could such baseness e'er pollute the skies?
Deifications were as common then,
As scepticism now-a-days with men.

The vilest actions prov'd no bar to rise,—
A blood-stain'd path the post-road to the skies!
An impious whim, in earnest or in sport,
To blacken heav'n, and compliment a court!
"Fear first made gods!" but wood and stone enshrin'd,
Could never ease the terrors of the mind.
However smooth'd and sculptur'd into shape,
The figure still was but the silly ape
Of some vain god:—upon the head or foot,
An emblem of his attribute was cut;
A rare device beside him too was plac'd,
To shew what victim suited best his taste.
The greedy altars seldom empty stood,—
Each god was gorged with his fav'rite food;
And if the suit (they gave but to get more,—
The victim offer'd was to bring a score,
Than earthly blessings they no better sought)
Were ever granted, it was dearly bought.
Did load of guilt give conscience the alarm?
Else whence arose of deities the swarm?
They sprung as fast as earth produced food,
As quarries marble, or as forests wood;
Or as the teeming Nile disgorged frogs,
That revell'd in the palace as in bogs;
The superstitious frenzy never ceas'd,
Until they had their greatest and their least.
The motley crew to render service strove,
From Egypt's onion to Olympian Jove;
From earth up to the skies th' arrangement went,
And to Elysium easy made th' ascent;
Just like a flight of steps, led up to rest,
So none that would could fail of being blest.

O happy days! with sin how much at odds,
When ev'ry cottage had its household gods!
How would devotion kindle o'er the earth,
As glow'd the embers on each sacred hearth;
The king and beggar like two brothers meet,
And blend distinction at the altar's feet;
And ev'ry class the two extremes between,
For lowliness contending would be seen;
The sympathetic flame seize on the whole,
And burn the mortal up in ev'ry soul!

Had piety and morals run so high,
Who'd dare the heathen system to decry?
Alas! the means could no such end attain,
Their views were false in ev'ry victim slain:
To crush a rival, or to crown a head,
Whole hecatombs a hundred times have bled;
A golden gift unlock'd the stores of fate,
And drew the secrets out by dint of weight;
The measure of devotion was its cost,
And he most zealous deem'd who offer'd most.
To cure the bad affections of the heart,
Was, in this scheme, not an avowed part;
The few who saw the colour of their crimes,
Look'd farther than the mirror of the times.
If virtue scarce could go in leading strings,
What chance of soaring on seraphic wings?

Ye guardians of religion, e'er be found
To stand inflexible on sacred ground;
So high a trust claims more than common care
To keep the pile you guard in good repair,

With man's inestimable treasure stor'd;
Let knowledge, zeal, and piety afford
Their best support;—insidious foes assail
The sacred temple—if not argue, rail.
Its beauty, through remissness, once defac'd,
Unfaithful watchmen will appear disgrac'd.
Take what your country bountifully gives,
And be no strangers where the poor man lives;
Respect maintain; but let not lucre taint
The heavenly affections of a saint.
The pattern you profess to imitate,
In low condition was most nobly great:
Humility becomes disciples best,
Whose teacher's life th' example fair express'd.
Bless'd is the land, where so serene a day
Of knowledge shines, that few can miss their way;
Each beacon set, if well with oil supplied,
Can hardly fail to prove a faithful guide.
The culture of a field, or garden, shews
What pains the manager of each bestows;
Pernicious weeds are taken up while green,
And rarely in maturity are seen
To shed their pestilential seeds around,
And render unproductive useful ground.
The human mind resembles virgin soil,
By nature wild, but fertile made with toil;
Bad dispositions check'd, the good gain strength,
And virtue, in full beauty, blooms at length;
The cultivator's care and skill appear,
No deeds of darkness wound the conscience here,
The heart, subdued into a pious frame,
When fortune frowns severest, is the same;

And reaps a richer harvest in content,
Than golden sickles yield the opulent.
Can proud distinctions, choicest boons of kings,
Confer the comfort humble virtue brings?
Amidst all changes of this world, she lives
Superior to the hardest lot it gives.

The love of money's to no rank confin'd—
It gnaws the monarch's, as the beggar's, mind;
The fear of want may rouse the latter's care,
Whose fund's upheld by what mere whim may spare,
And thrust into his heart a sharper sting
Than e'er the bugbear which he dreads would bring.
The real ills of want are less severe
Than those which fancy paints, urg'd on by fear;
As objects viewed through a misty sky
Seem large, but lessen to th' approaching eye.
What fears the despot on a golden throne,
Whose slaves have wealth, all which he calls his own?
His word is law,—obedient to his nod,
The vassals bring their off'ring to the god,
T' avert the fate that on his frown attends,
And bribe the dart that strikes whom it befriends:
'Twere better, sure, t' invite the fatal spear,
Than linger out a life of mis'ry here;
The suff'ring wretch each comfort must forego,
To eke the chain that binds him to his woe.
What fears he then?—he has just cause to fear,
Whose avarice has purchas'd gold so dear.
The band that ties the cottage to the throne
Is fine in texture, and to break most prone;

Authority must not a pinch apply,—
If tightly stretch'd, it will to pieces fly,
Which to cement, there is no harder task:
Thus wine, fermenting, bursts the brittle flask,
Whose parts in union cannot be entire,
Unless the whole's resolv'd to liquid fire.
The power of a prince is more or less,
Just as 'tis us'd to cherish or distress.
The hand that should have nurs'd each spot of ground,
Fenc'd with the laws of justice all around,
Was urged on by a far diff'rent care,
And but applied to make "a desert there."
The solder which their union did uphold
Is now misplac'd amongst his hoarded gold;
Affection's lost, the sacred spell is broke,
Which to supply he stronger makes the yoke,
Pursues his maxim even to its height,
And seizes all the treasure in the state.
A ghastly distance now appears between
Him and his slaves;—an adamantine screen
Against the force of ev'ry hostile dart,
That conscious fear must point full at his heart.
Tho' rous'd, thro' want or shame, th' indignant swarms
Shake off their chains, and seek redress in arms;
That's but the will, his reasons still are lame,—
No means they have to execute their aim.
A dotard's dream!—the conduct of a plot
Is badly manag'd when there's aught forgot:
In gleaning up the gold, the steel was left,
Which soon in ev'ry hand will find a heft,
To push its way thro' each embattl'd train,
That basely guards a tyrant's head for gain:

Impediments nor barriers can oppose
The indignation of infuriate foes;
The vassals shrink, and leave expos'd the head,
To cover which they're tinsel'd up and fed;
Uncheck'd, the torrent rushes on amain—
The tyrant falls the last among the slain;
Protection seeks in that he trusted most;
In vain he seeks, it but impels the host
To strike the sooner, and regain their own,—
The wealth he plunder'd to defend his throne.

Thus eastern gold, held up in shields to sight,
Allur'd the eager Greeks into the fight;
And weaken'd slaves that bore the massy show,
As much as it gave courage to their foe.

Match-making's now a useful trade become,
It gives employment to the deaf and dumb.
The second-sighted wights, as secrets, sell
Intrigues notorious as the parish bell;
So anxious are the gulls to know their fate,
With wonder swallow tales themselves relate:
Broad hints at truth excite each lover's pain,
And matches near extinct burn up again.
But money-matches are by far the worst,
The plague of house-wives, and by husbands curs'd:
The ends are bad—their use on these depends—
For what are matches without proper ends?
They kindle shyly, seldom at a spark,
And leave the house both comfortless and dark.
If e'er they catch a flame, it burns too slow
To light the mansion with a lively glow;

Doubtful and dim, it presently goes out:—
The inmates sit in cold reserve and doubt,
Amaz'd their match should give so little fire,
And in chagrin they diff'rent ways retire.
Unfit materials will not serve the turn,
Nor make up matches that will freely burn.

A fav'rite daughter, tutor'd, through mistake,
To love the world, and money for its sake,
Is now at years, and ready to bestow
Her hand on him that's rich, or deemed so:
Her fortune's mod'rate, but loud-blowing fame
Confers a larger portion on the dame;
Her vanity gives credit to the sound,
As truth her expectations might confound.
Not long she waits;—a suitor soon arrives,
Who, to attract attention, boldly drives
Up to the door. The first enquiry made,—
Has he a fortune, or some thriving trade,
Or good employment, where the profits bear
A just proportion to the agent's care;
Important trusts entitle to regard,
Which best appears in adequate reward?
Appearances sometimes delusive prove,—
Caution should check th' extravagance of love;
Money works wonders, when warm passion cools,
Excels all moral maxims of the schools;
Commands respect when nothing else will please—
A panacea for the heart's disease;
Figure and fashion keep the spirits high,
'Tis envy only would their worth decry.

The parent, long accustom'd to foresee,
Provides against the ills of poverty;
With anxious eye does ev'ry movement trace,
Lest the frail daughter should her heart misplace.
A girl of taste discards the name of wife
On lower terms than fashionable life:
A wise precaution for the lady's ease—
Rich husbands, sure, do nothing to displease.
His very faults from riches take their rise,
Which swell to virtues in the virgin's eyes;
Now deeply smit, with eager looks she views
Lures that her bosom deeply throbs to use.
A modest outset covers no deceit,
'Tis affectation that betrays the cheat;
Polite demeanour merits some respect,
But none can view the wealthy with neglect.
His curricle how handsome!—and the mare
Stands proof of plenty in her sleek brown hair.
What maid, just enter'd on her nubile age,
Can long resist so smart an equipage?
A husband furnish'd with such needful things
The best support for happy wedlock brings.
Money ties safely matrimonial knots;—
Sincere affection best suits humble lots.
The match is made, but love's not in the case,—
Th' attractive force is not in either face,
Nor in their persons, manners, nor the mind;
Inducements here the parties cannot find,
Or look not for;—the cement is their purse,
Of personal esteem a wretched nurse:
The torch of HYMEN stronger fuel requires,—
When money lights, soon are extinct its fires:

The gen'rous passion that should warm the heart,
Discordance check, and confidence impart,
Reciprocally ev'ry wish prevent,
And soothe the bosom into sweet content,
Has o'er their souls a weak and doleful sway,
The sport of accident, of whim the prey.
Reason's and nature's claims were both denied,
When he became a husband, she a bride;
Each took the other as a step to rise,
Not in their own, but in the public's eyes;
But soon the fine projected scheme is cross'd;
The airy bubbles, by fancy blown, are lost:
Their funds united are by much too low
To pay the charges of a round of show:
The source that nourish'd pleasure's idle dreams
Now sends forth sorrows in abundant streams;
Deceiv'd on either side, suspicions sour
The little comfort still within their pow'r:
Vows of attachment they with ease transgress,
And think no obligations can be less:
Domestic langour's irksome to support,
Recourse is had to places of resort;
Amusement's sought for in each changing scene,
To kill dull time, and dissipate the spleen;
Affected gaiety's put on abroad,
At home the heart discovers all its load.
Dear is the bargain that buys vain respect
At the expense of mutual neglect;
An empty compliment, that means no more
Than a brass rapper at the outside door.
No interchange of tenderness appears,
Sour looks offend the eyes, cross words the ears;

In gloomy mood they pine, or wrangle high,
So near a rupture is the nuptial tie:
Insipid all, the man commences sot,
And gives his mistress time to rue her lot.
Gold never yet the place of love supplied—
The husband's cold, indiff'rent is the bride;
From home he flies to seek what is not there—
She's left alone to struggle with despair;
They cross each other, and expostulate,
Until the contest ends in downright hate;
Hope, that sweetens the bitter cup of life,
Affords no prospect of relief from strife;
Frowns on the brow betray the heart's ill plight,
And, like dark clouds, discharge a storm ere night;
Resentments sour in angry words engage,
And all the rules of decency outrage.
Expensive pleasure, when the funds are low,
Gives up domestic happiness for woe.

The high and low in station differ wide,
Yet one's their aim, by one temptation tried;
Two roads they take, but travel till they meet,
And nearly are the same at PLUTO's feet.
But seldom gold to mortals gives content,—
The greatest hanker for aggrandisement.
The world itself, replenish'd all around,
Cannot restrain, within its spacious bound
This mad ambition, that attempts to rise
On golden pinions of unmeasur'd size,
Up to a height, where he alone may stand,
Beyond the reach of ev'ry rival's hand,

And with the Macedonian chieftain weep,
Because the earth's too small for his long arm to reap.
The pinnacle attain'd, (no mortal can)
What cause for exultation?—he's a man.
An archer of good aim his dart will throw,
Pomp disappear, and skulk asham'd below.
In this Utopian frenzy man's forgot,
Reason impoverish'd to enrich a sot,
Whose mental faculties no brighter shine
Than his extinguish'd with the fumes of wine.
Say which is worst—t' intoxicate the brain
With thirst of liquor, or with thirst of gain?
Gold's a torpedo to the niggard's soul,
Dries up th' affections, and benumbs the whole.
The sordid practices earthworms pursue
Provoke disdain, the only tribute due:
Can they feel tenderness for others' woe,
That on themselves the poorest gifts bestow?
Respect with some the drunkard may obtain,
As one's profusion is another's gain:
Excess awhile the senses dissipates,
Nor reason long to be re-seated waits;
Sleep's renovating pow'r throws off the load,
And sets the man refresh'd into his road;
A lucid interval—returning light—
May henceforth keep him in a sober plight,
Produce reflection to condemn what's past,
And persevere in duty to the last.
Destructive vice, what thousands dost enslave,
Thy victims beggar'd feed the greedy grave!
Vain is the plea, and shameless all excuse,
For this vile custom followed to abuse,—

Man's great dishonour, virtue's deadly foe,
Eclipse of reason, harbinger of woe.
But animal indulgence has a bound,
For mental cravings not a measure's found;
No satisfaction shadows can impart,
Imagination's dreams deceive the heart.
What more is gold unus'd?—an empty cheat,
In which base souls find confidence deceit:
Colombian treasures never yet explor'd
As much assist the miser as his hoard.
Keen advocates for sovereigns are worse
Than they who spurn the tyrants from their purse;
These dissipate what they should wisely spend,
Those nor the world nor will themselves befriend.
If gifts abus'd incur the guilt of sin,
Is justice slow correction to begin?
Mistaken notion;—drunkards go in rags,
And misers starve amidst their well-fill'd bags:
'Tis a hard task for moralists to tell
Which is the fittest for a place in hell.
The heart, deluded, nature's order breaks,
Ordain'd by wisdom, in the good it seeks;
Misplac'd on gewgaws, peace can ne'er obtain,
Its expectations, all its efforts, vain.
The golden dream may still amuse for years,—
When reason 'wakes, th' enchantment disappears.

One in a humble station struggles hard
T' emerge from meanness into some regard;
To get above the level of his state,
He rises early, and he watches late;

His means are quite unequal to the end,
Tho' time and strength the project will befriend;
The nearer way impatience better suits,
Tho' that, less clean, a traveller pollutes;
Who can, in dirty roads, escape a soil?
But money hides it, and rewards the toil:
Stains never notic'd on a rich man's coat
Disgrace the scrub that is not worth a groat:
Encourag'd by the practice of his kind,
He travels fastest when the least confin'd:
The rigid rules of virtue stop his pace,—
Encumber'd thus, what hope to win the race?
His journey's long, but ev'ry step he takes
The tedious distance somewhat shorter makes;
Yet still the object that his heart desires,
As he advances, constantly retires,—
Eludes his eagerness,—before him flies,
And leaves him panting far behind the prize.
The rainbow, tinged with a lovely grace,
Thus draws the boy into an endless chase;
Fast as he follows and increases speed,
The painted phantom does as fast recede.
'Tis downright folly to suppose a snail
The world can compass with its tardy trail;
But who imputes absurdity to him
That labours daily in as vain a whim?
Perhaps the man's not able to decide
Which most prevails, the love of gain or pride;
It matters not which passion bears the sway,
Ungrateful both, their slaves they badly pay!
Of little means he makes the best he can,
And ends his labour worse than he began:

The slender savings no precedence give,
Nor aid afford to make him better live:
For conscience wounded, and for virtue lost,
The largest sum defrays not such a cost.

The lottery's announc'd;—attend, ye wise,
To fortune's offer,—it may prove a prize;
Th' eventful hour draws on apace—give ear,
You've much to hope, and little have to fear;
A week deferr'd, perhaps a single day,
Will leave you no advantage in the play;
The wheel is rich, the purchase is but low,
And price will rise when it begins to go.
See how the goddess deals her favours round,—
To this gives twenty, that ten thousand pound;
In either hand she carries golden gifts,
Impartially bestow'd; and often lifts
One in a low condition to a pitch,
That sets him on a level with the rich.
Go sell your Sunday-clothes, ye porters, maids;
And ye that follow unproductive trades,
Your parlour furniture—these you can spare;
To dress, and treat your friends, awhile forbear;
Curtail expenses, husband well each pound,
And buy a share before the wheel turns round;
The more it holds, you have the better chance,
And, after drawing, tickets will advance.
Should fortune wayward prove, you still have hands
To answer ev'ry creditor's demands:
You in your trades a safer portion hold
Than he whose acres may be spent and sold.

If you should spend the earnings of a week,
You never have a livelihood to seek;
Besides, the credit loyal subjects gain
Will balance any loss you may sustain:
Who but the disaffected to the state
Its projects to advance would hesitate?

The blanks exceed the prizes, some have said;
A mere surmise of dastards, more afraid
To risk their money than veracity;—
No fear of hazard will excuse a lie.
Who gets a prize will at the blanks connive,
They cannot Fortune of her gifts deprive:
What folly, then, to calculate on loss,
When luck may come as certain as a cross.
These love their money as a leech does gore,
Who quit it not till they can hold no more:
In speculation there's a wrong and right,—
Most scrup'lously they keep the last in sight;
Nor is it virtue that directs them here,
They see no crime, if there's no loss to fear.
The guilt of gaming winnings expiate,
And conscience, like a watch-dog, takes the bait.

This plan to nurse, for public welfare laid,
The government affords all needful aid.
The M———r, both provident and wise,
Whose lott'ry-ticket always is a prize,
Appropriates a part of what is rais'd,—
The priv'lege must be paid for, if not prais'd:
To leave the whole to Fortune's freakish mood
Would do the public not so great a good.

The body politic to man's compar'd:
The principle of life dispers'd and shar'd,
In just proportion, up to nature's aim,
Gives health and vigour to the vital frame;
Should too much flow into the hands and feet,
And there stagnate, the heart would cease to beat.

The golden trumpet echoes far and near,
And castle-builders with attention hear;
Already fancy deals her bounty out,
And each adventurer grows rich in thought:
Who wishes for a prize will choose the best,
And leave for distribution all the rest;
This liberty to every one belongs—
No fault is found when each the other wrongs;
Good fortune to forestall 's a common game—
Where all are guilty, none is put to shame.
Industry, full of thought, suspends his stroke,
The Goddess more compos'dly to invoke;
And breathing stands, forgetful of his toil,
Neglects the anvil, and half-tilled soil,
Is all contrivance how to raise the stake,
The number fix on, and a fortune make.
Some incantations,—folly's all extremes—
But the sagacious put most trust in dreams:
In sleep, what number makes the deepest print
A meaning more than common must have in't;
Such notices are not to be despis'd,
Of things to come some have been advertis'd;
The admonition's kindly sent to shew
On whom the Dame her favours will bestow.

The dupes, so sanguine, last are to suspect
They dream of that their waking thoughts select.

The prospect brightens as the day draws nigh,
No clouds deface hope's visionary sky.
But mark how soon high expectations leave
The disappointed spec'latists to grieve!
The wheel goes round to prove the game is fair,
But for the many little luck is there;
Capricious Fortune, as the tickets rise,
On one that's rich confers the greatest prize,
With blanks alone the needy she supplies.
The post equipp'd its destin'd route pursues,
Not over-laden with the heavy news;
Share-holders anxious at each office wait,
And learn too soon the cruelty of fate,
But this good lesson not too late—To drive
Their trades on briskly is the way to thrive.

Thus suddenly the hemisphere serene
Is hung with black around the changed scene;
The vapours thicken, and admit but light
To show their horrors to the lab'ring sight;
In headlong torrents rushes down the rain,
And sweeps away the riches of the plain:
The flatt'ring prospects of a painful year
Deceive the owner's hope, and disappear.

Is heaven partial, giving more and less?
Why then unhappy those who most possess?
Here each appointment is a place of trust,
Where conduct shows who are the false and just.

Though high and low unequal may appear,
He merits most who acts best in his sphere;
A barren soil, by management and care,
Yields what's sufficient, when a rich one's bare.
Neglect of duty, surest source of woe;—
Well-done alone is happiness below.

The pow'r of gold in ages past was own'd,
When man beneath the tyrant's sceptre groan'd;
The darkness of the times enhanc'd its worth,
And gave the despot more than human birth:
At golden thrones th' astonish'd vassals gaz'd,
Then to a god the vilest mortal rais'd.
Truth has at length aside the curtain drawn,
And now a king is honour'd as a man.

But has the happy age arriv'd, when gold
Has on the heart's affections lost its hold;
When each exerts th' advantages possess'd
But to promote the welfare of the rest;
When all are fir'd with a generous zeal,
And self is swallow'd in the public weal?
Th' infatuation has the farther spread
Since darkness from the light of science fled,
And freedom broke the fetters of mankind,
That had for centuries enslav'd the mind.
When will was law, the subject but a slave,
His privilege, submission or a grave;
When despotism's unrelenting sway
Made timid mortals for their fetters pay;—
The love of gold was not a common vice,
For one alone indulg'd in avarice.

Safety alone in poverty was plac'd,—
He that grew rich was murder'd or disgrac'd:
The little glean'd was added to the hoard,
And render'd more propitious his lord:
Yet he might thank the bounty of the chief,
Who took the gold, and gave his soul relief.
Amidst deep wretchedness he still could boast
Of greater freedom on Golconda's coast
Than thousands, natives of a land that's free,
Who basely sell for gold their liberty.
This gift, conferred to enlarge the mind,
Through misconception, keeps it more confin'd:
Increased knowledge and superior skill,
Exerted but to serve a selfish will,
Pervert the end for which the blessing's giv'n,
And counteract the gracious plan of heav'n.
To leave a public for a private aim
Confounds all order in the social frame:
Each in due place is helpful to the rest,—
Dependant all the parts, the whole is blest:
Welfare is certain at the proper post,—
Deserted that, all happiness is lost.

To win the heart how many rivals plead
Pretended merits, and too well succeed!
What best deserves it gets the smallest share,
Despis'd its offer, and unheard its pray'r;
All competition with the world is lost,
Its sway increases just as reason's cross'd.
By custom dup'd to put on folly's vest,
The heart imagines 'tis supremely bless'd;

Prone to believe the outside is the whole,
This vain delusion enervates the soul:—
Virtue bids highest—the reward is heav'n,
And happiness, as earnest, now is giv'n.
While reason owns the justice of her plea,
The passions raise a strong conspiracy
To break the plan concerted, and control
The virtuous purpose formed in the soul.
Deceiv'd by false appearances, she yields,
And gathers flow'rs in fancy's fairy fields;
Fresh cropp'd, they bloom delightful to the eye,
But in the hand they wither soon and die;
The blossom dies, the thorn is left behind,
So closely pain with pleasure is combin'd:
More lasting that, a momentary joy
Full often does all future peace destroy.
Disgusted now, she tries another range
Of prospect fair, then pants again for change;
Amidst wrong notions and discordant views,
Is still unsettled, and her search renews;
By disappointment hope is not depress'd,
But thinks the next attempt will prove the best.
In pleasure's grove, where reason gathers least,
Of fruits forbidden fancy makes a feast;
Warm with desire, not long the heart forbears
To bathe in sweets the sorceress prepares;
For bliss impatient, to fruition flies,
And innocence, a victim, prostrate lies.
Imagination's pictures lively glow
With brighter tints than nature's blossoms shew;
Each image sports, fantastically dress'd,
Before the eye, and seeks to be caress'd;

The passions blind discover no disguise,
Till trial proves its promises but lies.
Extreme indulgence reason puts to shame,—
It forfeits both its character and name.

The soul, quite sated with the charms of sense,
So poor in proof, so flatt'ring in pretence,
Sees folly written in each low pursuit,
Assumes the angel, and forsakes the brute;
Shakes from her wings the drossy dust of earth,
Upwards aspires to claim her heav'nly birth.
She traces now the sun's resplendent way,
And basks in beams of an eternal day;
Asks anxious how his flaming axle turns,
How SATURN freezes, and how MERC'RY burns;
Enquires what latent source supplies the rays,
Still undiminish'd, in the solar blaze;
What mighty pow'r projects the whirling spheres,
Their progress guides, and measures out their years;
With wing untir'd, attempts a bolder flight,
And soars amidst the glories of the night;
Sees suns in stars, a system in each sun,
Where planets and their moons in circles run;
Darts through the vasts of space without control,
And tries, in thought, to grasp the boundless whole.
'Tis thus the soul, by mud-heads call'd a clod,
Displays her powers, and proclaims a God:—
A God who spoke, and through the empty space
Each world arose, and took its destin'd place,—
Propell'd exactly with sufficient force
To keep the track mark'd for its future course;

Nor last the Earth, in grand majestic state,
Its days and years began to circulate.
Creation's ample volume open lies,
Where reason finds a pleasing exercise;
Her keenest acumen exhausted here
Descries no error—no defects appear;
All order is,—each part, from pole to pole,
Contributes to the beauty of the whole;
Each final cause demonstrates deep design,
And proves the source, from whence it rose, divine.
The sceptic arrogantly makes a fault
What does supreme intelligence exalt:
Tho' mysteries abound that none explain,
To scoff is impious, and to doubt profane:
It were less worthy of a God, could each
Frail man the end of his great purpose reach.
Does God on man bestow an intellect
His ways to censure, and his plans correct?
Where knowledge, in its search, can find no shore,
The wise submit, and silently adore.
Since reason shines in all that's understood,
What is unknown must be confess'd as good;
No disproportions can the structure shame,
Which pow'r and wisdom infinite did frame.
Above, below, where'er you turn your eyes,—
On this well-furnish'd globe, the star-pav'd skies,
Or tribes that cleave the water or the air,—
All these a watchful Providence declare.
As darkness at the sun's approach retires,
And each nocturnal twinkling spark expires,
While nature's beauteous forms, refresh'd with dew,
In brighter colours burst upon the view,

So renovated reason breaks away
The clouds of error, and pours in a day
Of truth divine upon the mental sight,
And cheers the soul with beams of heav'nly light.
To truth a convert, she discards all views
But those of virtue, and the path pursues
That leads direct to happiness above,—
The way that sweetens rancour into love.
Religion claims, without reserve, the heart—
It leaves to no competitor a part:
The right's supreme;—division here destroys
The soul's possession of the highest joys.
The trifles of the world, that swell so high,
And mimic mountains in the cheated eye,
Now stand expos'd in all their littleness;
All earthly grandeur is than nothing less.
Opinions puts to an impartial test,
Rejects the faulty, and adopts the best;
Esteems external forms but as they tend
The soul to furnish for her destin'd end;
The shadow for the substance will not pass;
The single eye's a microscopic glass,
To render visible, and faults espy,
That in the motive interwoven lie;
Vain ostentation shuns with studious care,
And most devotion feels in secret pray'r;
Shuts out the world, converses close within,
And gives no quarter to remaining sin;
Sublimes the passions, subjugates the will,
And keeps the risings of ambition still;
Beholds the changes of this fickle scene,
Herself unchang'd, submissively serene;—

No disappointment can the temper sour,
That leaves events to a superior pow'r;—
Delights in duty, certain of her end,
And tries to make each enemy a friend.

FINIS.

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